

Mr. EDWARDS of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my friend and colleague, JOHN DINGELL for becoming the longest serving Member of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Mr. DINGELL's service is unparalleled. For 53 years, he has worked diligently for the American people and his legislative accomplishments are unparalleled. Serving alongside Chairman DINGELL, I've come to know why he has earned the deep respect and admiration of scores of House Members, Senators and 11 different Presidents.

A true champion of health care reform, JOHN DINGELL has been at the center of every major health policy reform of the last 50 years. In 1965, he was central to the creation of Medicare, a program that saves millions of elderly Americans from the horrors of poverty and disease every year. Continuing his fight for a healthier country, JOHN has worked on behalf of children, the poor, and many others who can't afford quality health care and has been a visionary in authoring legislation to ensure affordable health care for all.

Today JOHN DINGELL broke a record, but that record won't be why we remember him. It will be his character, his accomplishments, and his unyielding belief that this institution can make a positive impact in the lives of everyday Americans. Today JOHN DINGELL made history, but his lasting legacy will be how he has shaped the history of a great nation through a lifetime of public service.

I consider it one of the true privileges of my lifetime to know JOHN DINGELL as a colleague, a mentor and a close personal friend. His wisdom and his example of leadership will continue to make a difference for American families long after we here are long gone. God bless JOHN DINGELL and the love of his life, his wife, Debra.